

92-01

ER-8.2

Current Standard Format to be Used for All Office of Energy Research Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Distribution

The Department of Energy Headquarters' Office of Environment, Safety and Health (EH) has provided informal guidance to the Office of Energy Research (ER) on the acceptable format for FONSI's that ER submits to EH with draft Environmental Assessments (EA). I have advised EH that I will transmit the current acceptable FONSI format to all Energy Research elements in an effort to standardize the document's format and presentation. I anticipate that ER will be preparing many EAs over time on a variety of proposed actions. As we strive for excellence in our NEPA-related activities, producing standard, uniform, and quality FONSI's will aid us in achieving this in a more efficient manner. Please communicate this information to all of your DOE and contractor elements that need to know.

The attached approved FONSI (for the Tokamak Fusion Test Reactor) represents the current format that should be followed for Energy Research FONSI's. The technical content will vary with each FONSI based upon the proposed action, but the "presentation" of the FONSI should follow this example with special reference to the items noted below.

- 1) The attached example contains headings and titles that are boldfaced, boldfaced/underlined, small case, and CAPITALIZED. The standard ER FONSI should follow this format exactly. The textual material of the sections on AGENCY, ACTION, SUMMARY, and PUBLIC AVAILABILITY should begin on the same line as the section headings. The textual material for all other sections and subsections in the FONSI should start on the line following the headings (not on the same line

as the heading).

- 2) Note that the order of placement in the FONSI of the major sections is as follows - AGENCY, ACTION, SUMMARY, DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, ALTERNATIVES, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, DETERMINATION, and PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.
- 3) There should be a brief explanation of the action in the SUMMARY, and a citation of the DOE/EA number.
- 4) The subsections of the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS section all should be small case/boldface/underlined.

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- 5) The DOE 800 phone number should be included along with the EH-25 phone number in the PUBLIC AVAILABILITY section. Note that this section is at the end of the FONSI, not at the beginning. Note also that the DOE/EA number appears again in the PUBLIC AVAILABILITY line.
- 6) The style and placement of the date and EH signature lines at the end of the FONSI should follow exactly the attached format example. These two items should never appear as the only items on the last page of a FONSI, they should always appear along with other text on the last page. When the date and signature appear on the last page, along with the DOE/EA number (in the PUBLIC AVAILABILITY line), there will be no uncertainty that the signature of approval applies to the action evaluated by the EA in question.

EH advises that a FONSI should be a "stand-alone" document in terms of the descriptions of the proposed action, alternatives,

and environmental impacts. It should not contain all of the details that appear in the EA, but should contain enough information (drawn from the EA) to support the conclusions that there will be no significant impacts, and therefore, support the determination that an EIS is not needed. Each FONSI accompanying an EA that is transmitted to ER/HQ, should be reviewed by the Field and Program staffs to be sure that the FONSIs are consistent with the EA in terms of technical content.

FONSIs often are revised at HQ, especially after an EA is revised based on review and comment from ER, EH, and GC, or after state coordination. To assist in the revisions and to save time, all FONSIs transmitted to ER/HQ should be done both with hard paper copy (along with the EA) and on computer disc in Wordperfect. If a FONSI needs to be revised, either my office will do it or the ER/HQ Program Office will do it after coordination with the Field and Laboratory staff, to save time. Every revision to a FONSI should contain the date of the revision and a revision number, so that ER/HQ can be sure that the most recent version of the FONSI is being handled.

If there are any questions on this ER NCO Communication, please call me
(FTS 233-2314) or Clarence Hickey (FTS 233-4930).

James K. Farley
NEPA Compliance Officer
Office of Energy Research

Attachment

cc:

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R. Simon, ER-2

Distribution:

F. Koomanoff, ER-10
A. Evans, ER-13
M. Tersinski, ER-14
S. Goel, ER-14
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